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Almost all the cultivators are Baharna or Hassawis, who are of the Shiite sect, descendants of Baharna who emigrated to Arabia. The Sunni Arabs do not work in the gardens. The people living in the villages which are scattered among the date gardens originally earned their livelihood entirely by working in the gardens; now many of them are employed by the oil company or in Manama. During the date picking season, which in many ways resembles the hop picking season in England, temporary villages of palm branch huts spring up among the date gardens when people from other parts of Bahrain come to pick the crop.

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The village people are the aboriginal inhabitants of the country and in the past they suffered much during the many invasions of Bahrain when their homes, gardens and water channels were destroyed and even in times of peace they were regarded as milch cows, whose wealth was extracted by their rulers. But in recent times their position has changed, they are more prosperous than they used to be and are on terms of equality with their neighbours.

BOAT BUILDING

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It is claimed by some authorities on Middle Eastern history that the Phoenicians originated in Bahrain and sailed their craft up the Gulf, which then extended much farther northwards than it does today. and following the Euphrates to the point where the river is nearest to the Syrian coast, they landed and settled there. This may or may not be true but there is no doubt that the people of Bahrain have been sailors for at least as many centuries as the pearl industry has been in existence and their stitched boats not only sailed the Persian Gulf but entered the Indian Ocean.

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Most of Bahrain's boats were in former days employed as pearlers, and although the Kuwait shipyards built the largest craft it was natural that Bahrain, nearer the Indian source of timber and itself the centre of the pearling industry, should have its own yards. It should also be remembered that Kuwait is a comparatively modern town, having been founded early in the 18th century, before which date it did not attain importance as a harbour for north-east Arabia.

Today most of the boat building is carried on in Muharraq, although there are some yards at the western end of Manama. In former days, before iron nails were obtainable, Arab boats were not nailed but stitched together, with a giant needle and cord as thread, yet these boats of such fragile construction were able to weather the heaviest gales that swept the Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

In recent years launches have been made in greater numbers than sailing boats, so builders have inclined to specialise in the construction of those boats to which engines can best be fitted. For this reason many "jalibuts" have been built, they can be identified by their vertical bow and the straightness of the keel. The origin of this name is doubtful and many suggestions have been made to explain it. Possibly

are chairs, tables, window curtains, often framed pictures and photographs, and usually a gramophone; in the houses of the wealthier people there is often a wireless set. Coffee shops reflect the change in ways of living. They are important institutions in Bahrain and take the place of clubs or cafes in Europe. Each has its regular clientele, but the popularity of individual coffee shops varies according to fashion. Ten years ago, coffee shops were usually small shops inside the bazaar, furnished with a few rough benches, where little else than coffee could be obtained. To-day, most of the coffee shops are elaborately decorated and illuminated, provided with little tables and chairs, and a gramophone or a wireless set which plays loudly and incessantly, relaying Arabic programmes to the customers. Some of the coffee shops are divided into two parts: in one part only coffee and drinks are served, and in the other part regular meals can be obtained, including Indian and Persian dishes, bread, cakes and ices in the summer. Most of the proprietors are foreigners—Indians, Persians, and Iraqi, who are more enterprising in these matters than the local people. The bigger coffee shops are now referred to by the public as 'otels.'

Games. The popularity of games is another recent development during the last ten years. Before this, nobody played games except the men of the Levy Corps, who were made to do so, which was regarded as a peculiarity of the Commanding Officer. To-day, there are half-a-dozen local football teams and several hockey teams, who play against each other or against teams of sailors or Europeans from the Bahrain Petroleum Company. They play well, and are very keen, and every match attracts a large and interested audience from the town. Many of the parents of the young men who play disapprove of hockey and football, which they consider dangerous and unnecessary, chiefly because they did not play themselves when they were young. There is an entire lack of class distinction in these games: the sons of shaikhs play side-by-side with policemen, clerks, and taxi drivers. Although games have improved the physique of those who play them, the use of motor cars instead of horses or donkeys has caused a great many people to become soft and flabby. Sons of wealthy fathers, especially the young members of the Ruling Family, have entirely left off taking any exercise. They use a car to go a few yards; they never walk, and the only occasion on which they ride a horse is during marriage celebration or on public holidays, such as the annual accession celebrations.

Class Changes. The depression in the pearl trade and the recent improvement in the bazaars has caused an upheaval in financial positions, and with it a certain change in the political importance of classes. This change is gradually, though unwillingly, being appreciated by the Ruling Family. In the days when the pearl trade was flourishing, pearl merchants and nakhudas were the monied classes, and their money gave them great power, which they did not scruple to use for their own benefit. To-day, the men who used to be worth lacs of rupees are, in many cases, almost bankrupt, and petty traders, shop-keepers, and men who happen to own property in Manamah, are becoming the monied class. The old powerful pearl merchants were, in many cases, self-made men who started life as divers, but their wealth made them important and, though most of them could neither read or write, they were the people who mattered in Bahrain. Many of these men have lost all their influence because their money has gone. The class which is now becoming prosperous is more progressive, more mixed, and better educated, but as a community it does not hang together because, unlike the case of the pearl industry, its prosperity does not depend upon one trade alone. One of the serious disadvantages of the change is that the pearl industry provided work, during part of the year, for many thousands of men, but the people who are now making money provide little employment for the people. At present, about five thousand divers are working in the oil field. They are making a great deal more money than they would normally make from diving and, besides earning money, they are paying back their debts to the nakhudas by regular monthly instalments, so both parties are satisfied; but this employment is not permanent and, when present construction work at the oil field is finished, there will be a sudden increase in unemployment which will have to be dealt with by the Government.

The Ruling Family. The life and outlook of the members of the Ruling Family, with a few notable exceptions, has changed less than that of any other community. Although there is a great difference between the outlook of the older men and those who have grown up during the last ten years, the attitude of the family as a whole is

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

Over 61 percent of this population lives in the three towns of Manamah, Muharraq, and Hedd;[5] the rest, 38.5 percent, is scattered about in 90 villages and hamlets concentrated mostly in the northern and northeastern tip of the largest island. In the 9-year period between the two censuses the population had increased 22 percent, mainly in the three towns mentioned. The village population remained almost stationary (actually an absolute increase of 3.5 percent and a relative decrease of 5.5 percent). The concentration of increase in the towns can be explained by the better sanitary conditions existing there and the influx of foreigners. Evidently there was little local migration during this period from village to town, although in some cases it was found that villages had been deserted or greatly reduced in size.[6] It is interesting to note that the only population movement took place in some of the Arab Sunni villages.[7]

Tables I and III are in a certain sense misleading, for they give a false picture of homogeneity in the population (84 percent Bahrain subjects, 96 percent Muslims) that does not exist. Society in Bahrain is divided into several groupings, in most cases distinct and recognizable. Association with one group in many instances implies a certain occupational specialization, but the main forces that have determined social division are religion, tribal loyalties, and nationality.

THE SHI'IS AND THE SUNNIS

The Muslim Arab population of Bahrain is divided into Shi'is and Sunnis, who in almost all cases never live in the same village. The Shi'is live in their own tightly-knit communities and do not intermix with the rest of the population to any considerable degree. Fighting — especially in the larger towns, when the two communities do come into contact — frequently breaks out between the two groups, necessitating the intervention of the police and even the British navy.[8] A recent index of the feeling between the two groups is the fact that for the last several years there has been no municipal council for the capital city, Manamah, for the simple reason that no agreement could be reached on the number of seats to be allotted each of the two Muslim groups.

Aside from the small minority of Persians, the Shi'is are all Baharnah. There is no agreement as to the ethnic origin of these people; however, they now speak Arabic and are regarded as Arabs. They are the oldest group among the present inhabitants of the shaykhdom and have been subjected through the centuries to successive conquests, so that altho gh at present they equal or exceed the Sunnis in number — as the 1941 census

[5] See Table II.
[6] *Census 1950*, p. 6.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[8] Abbas Farooghy, *The Bahrain Islands* (New York, 1951), p. 99.

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

indicates — they constitute the poorer and lower classes of society and manifest all the markings of a minority group. Until recently they lived hardly above the servile state, their occupational specialization being exclusively the cultivation of the soil and other menial labor. The arrival of the British, which has assured them some security in person and a guarantee of minimum rights, and the development of the oil industry, which has opened possibilities of alternative employment, have had the effect of gradually raising these people from their status as second-class citizens.

The Sunnis act as the majority group. This has been especially true since a Sunni tribe established its political dominance over the islands in the 18th century. The Sunnis present a common front toward other groups; among themselves, however, they are divided into several communities and tribes. The largest Sunni community is the Huwalah. Its members are townsmen living by trade; and as townsmen everywhere, they do not manifest marked feelings of solidarity. They can perhaps be regarded as the nucleus of a future middle class.

The Utab, if not the largest Sunni tribe, is the most influential. This is due to the fact that the Khalifah family, one of its sub-tribes, has ruled the islands without serious interruption for almost 200 years. Every member of the Khalifah family has the title of "shaykh." Along with the privileges and prestige he enjoys as a result of his position, he has certain obligations and restrictions on his conduct and manner of life. For instance, in recent years many Bahrain subjects, especially among the younger city population, have taken to wearing European dress. No member of the ruling family may do so.

The two other Sunni tribes of any importance are the Sadah and the Dawasir, the first because of its alleged sacred origin, the second because of its comparative wealth.*

Unlike the Shi'is, the Sunnis are relatively mobile. They depend for their livelihood on trade, pearling, fishing, and more recently on employment in the oil industry. Boat building also used to be a fairly important industry. It is very seldom that a Sunni is found engaged in agriculture as a life occupation except as a landowner.

As has been shown, among the two main native elements social division and social tensions rest on religious foundations. Religious affiliation determines to a considerable degree the social and economic position of the individual. When mass violence breaks out it has so far been in terms of Shi'is and Sunnis, never in terms of economic groups.

An interesting development in recent years is the stress of the dominant

* Most of the Dawasir returned in anger to the Arabian mainland in the early 1920's, soon after Shaykh Hamad, whom they disliked, assumed control. For the story of their return see Government of Bahrain, *Administrative Report for the Years 1926-1937* (Bahrain, 1937), pp. 8–9.

8:Qubain S-5 (1952-53)1955 MZ2 Bahrain MZ2

An interesting development in recent years is the stress of the dominant
186 group, the Sunnis, on the unity and brotherhood of all Muslims and Arabs.
659 In 1950, when the second census was made, it was planned to count the two groups separately. This proposal, however, was construed as a British scheme to divide the Muslims and set them against each other. Strong objections were made by both groups, but primarily by the Sunnis, to the government and consequently this aspect of the census was abandoned. No such objections were raised during the census only nine years earlier.

186 Two factors can perhaps account for this rather nascent stress on unity: emerging nationalism and new economic forces. The conception of nationality is a Western contribution and a new arrival in the Persian Gulf. In Bahrain it is still a vague idea and certainly has not replaced to any degree the existing loyalties. It manifests itself in two ways: first, negatively in a desire to expel the foreigner (this has considerable appeal: it is concrete, intellectually easy to grasp, can be used as a rallying cry, and above all does not conflict with established social patterns); and second, positively, in a confused ideal of a pan-Arab, pan-Islamic union. No clear distinction is drawn between the two last concepts and the terms are used interchangeably. It must be admitted, however, that the pan-Arab aspect of the ideal predominates. This new spirit of nationalism has had the effect of creating a greater emphasis on unity among the native population. Furthermore, through this intellectual device the two groups can now present a common front against foreigners to protect their rights and interests, whether real or imaginary.

565 The new economic force for unity is the oil industry. On the surface
178 things seem as they have always been. In fact a change, subtle and hard
464 to detect, has taken place. The oil industry, as indicated previously, has
186 opened the doors of employment to the Shi'is. This has resulted in bettering slightly their economic condition and consequently their relative status vis-à-vis other groups. Furthermore, such employment has meant that they are no longer restricted to agriculture. They can now sell their labor and skills as everyone else in a wider and more favorable market. On the job at the company installations, Shi'i and Sunni are brought together as laborers or artisans and placed on the same footing. For the first time in their history it has become possible for individuals from both groups to collaborate in certain areas of action, not as Shi'is or Sunnis, but as members of an economic group.

THE JEWS

162 A third native religious group is the small Jewish minority comprising
563 about 250 persons. Its members are well known for their industry, their
463 higher standard of living, their higher rate of education, and their amenability to Western influences. They are exclusively engaged in trade and money changing.